

opportunities to teach along these lines; to foster a just pride in the great historic branch of Christendom to which he and his young people belong. If he is faithful, they will be better members of the local church, because more intelligent and devoted members of the denomination.

Then, the Christian Endeavor Society is a veritable trade school of efficiency in Christian service. The most earnest purpose to be useful will not avail without training in the art of being useful. The heart must have zeal and the will decision, but also the fingers must have skill. Multitudes of Christians earnestly long to be efficient, but do not know how. Educated men and women are at a loss how to conduct the simplest prayer service; how to preside at a business meeting; how to state a motion, or to put it to vote. How difficult it is in any congregation to get the records neatly, intelligently, and accurately kept! How many hundreds of churches are crippled for lack of some one to handle the finances with reasonable skill, or even to keep the accounts so that they can be understood, and the books balanced! How many pastors can find handy a man or woman to make chairman of a committee with any assurance that the committee will perform its duty, or, indeed, will ever be convened? Not because people are unwilling to serve Christ and the church, but because they have never been trained, and hence do not know how.

Christian Endeavor is doing wonders to correct this state of things. It has thousands of young men and women—even in the Junior societies of boys and girls—who can preside at business meetings with ease and dignity; keep accurate records and accounts; write intelligent and interesting reports; do well the very things that need doing well in every congregation. This is an immense gain in practical efficiency. Piety being equal, the man or woman trained in methods of Christian work is a better church member than the man or woman untrained.

The Christian Life

Son of God, Immortal

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove:

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death: and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man; he knows not why,—
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine.
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

—From "In Memoriam," by Alfred Tennyson.

PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

"CAN WE KNOW WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?"

I What saith the Scripture?

- a Eternal life defined. John 17:3.
- b Who has eternal life? John 5:24; I John 5:20; John 6:47.
- c We do not earn it, but it is given to us by Christ. John 10:28; Rom 6:23; I John 5:11; John 17:2.

II How can we know it?

1. By God's word, the Bible. I John 5:13.
2. By obeying his word. I John 2:5.
3. By loving the brethren. I John 3:14.
4. By loving in deed and in truth. I John 3:18.
5. By his Holy Spirit. I John 3:24; Rom 8:14, 16; I John 4:13.

III Remarks.

1. Note the Apostles' words, "We know."
2. What if we are unwilling to obey all of the commandments?
3. We can have eternal life and then lose it. We have to be careful to abide in him.
4. Let us no longer doubt, but know that we have eternal life.

J. L. GILLIN.

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

MARY M. BAUMAN

"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." As I read these words I am made to wonder whether we as Christians are growing or going back to the state from which we started. How many of us "joined church" a month or a year or years ago and yet we are just the same—have the same besetting sin, the same bad disposition, the same weakness in trial, the same coldness of heart, the same faint resemblance to Christ. We have no new knowledge, no increased interest in the kingdom, no new strength, no new fruits. Are we not forgetting that growth is a proof of life? Forgetting how awfully far man may go in his profession yet not be a true Christian. He may be like a wax figure, the very image of a believer, yet not have in him the breath of God. He may have the name to live yet be dead.

Spurgeon had the likeness of his boys taken every birthday until twelve years old, and it was with a pleasing interest one could note the change as a result of growth from year to year. Suppose it were possible to take photos of our spiritual growth every year. Would it be with a pleasing interest God and ourselves could look upon the change? Would there be a regular advancement, or perhaps growth for a while then dwarfed, and some may even have gone back to babyhood. Let us notice some of the things which mark our Christian growth.

First: *A more prompt recognition of the Divine will.* Christ said, "I came to do the will of him that sent me." We should say, "I live to do the will of him that loves me." No true follower will flatly refuse to do his will, nor recognize that will in one case and not in another. God cannot guide us with his eye if our gaze only occasionally reverts to his countenance—it must be fixed. God discovers to us some evil habit in which we indulge or reveals the fact that our affections are on forbidden objects, or that we cherish hatred or resentment and refuse to be recon-

ciled. We need to search but little to find our besetting sin—the idol of our heart. Do we promptly recognize His will concerning it and rid ourselves of it? If we increase in promptness in perceiving the openings of duty, we have a positive proof of growth.

Why does it so often hurt when the Word is preached? Because God's will concerning us is revealed. When we read we throw aside what we do not like. But when preached by one of God's servants, we refuse to recognize His will—get angry at the preacher when it is really God speaking thru him—go on in our sinful way and take the awful consequences rather than break our will to God's. Tell me such a one is growing in grace? Ah no! Rather going the other way.

Second: *A heartier acceptance of the will of God.* When parents in their wiser judgment offer to give the child only beneficial things, withholding harmful things, does it please the parents to see the child agonize to make its will their will? Can the Father be pleased to see his child agonize before heartily accepting what the Father sees best to send? Some see and know his will, yet argue and waste time before finally yielding. We do not leap to obey as Peter—do not welcome God's will when it comes in unpleasant shapes. A little boy who had lost a much loved ring was reproved by his sister for praying about it. He replied, "Praying may not bring it back but it will make me content without it, if it is God's will." When we heartily accept God's will there will be a glowing and joyous receiving of things distasteful to the natural man because growing faith so clearly beholds the love which is their source and the developed character which is their fruit.

Third: *A more constant sense of the presence of the Lord.* There is no end to possibility of growth here. Do you feel you are more in his presence each day? Is he with you in work, in prayer, in recreation, in repose, or is he afar off? A praying sailor was seen to start to his work, then return to his birth, and come out looking like a different man. A comrade said to him, "What did you forget?" He replied, "After I got out I found Jesus was not with me. I could not go without Jesus, so I went back to my closet to find him. Now he is with me and I can go." Do you feel his presence with you so that the moment it is withdrawn you know it as did that lad? There are those who are as conscious of the Heavenly Presence as of any earthly personality. Is your experience vague or real?

Fourth: *A closer approach to ceaseless prayer.* To pray as we ought brings growth; growth makes a more fervent desire to "pray without ceasing." Spoken words are not necessary but that inward longing after him whom the soul loveth. An underlying desire constantly felt as a hidden pain or a secret joy is felt. Possessed by this spirit as by the atmosphere—possessed but not oppressed—an exhilaratory, uplifting influence. Do you pray oftener than at first? Men of God, far